INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
OCTOBER 2, 1940 :

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

- - - - -

IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE COOK

- - - - -

A good cookbook is the homemaker's best friend when it comes to planning and preparing meals. But the directions may take her on an uncharted course through the mysteries of "simmering," "sautéing," and "creaming." The special vocabulary of cooking keeps growing, so it's a good plan to take time out every once in awhile to see exactly what some of these words mean.

For example, do you know exactly what a recipe for beef stew means when it says, "simmer" until the meat is tender? Actually simmering means to cook in water that is about 185 degrees F. The exact temperature isn't so important, but a good cook should know that simmering is just below boiling temperature. It is a slower, more gentle process that gives you tender pieces of meat in the rich gravy of your stew.

"Panbroiling" is another meat cookery term that has come into popular use lately. It means to cook in a skillet on top of the stove -- without added fat, without water, and without a cover. It is the method to use for tender chops and steaks that have fat of their own and are quickly cooked. Pour off the fat that renders out, so the meat will not actually cook in fat.

"Sautéing" is another puzzler, all the more confusing because it comes from a French word meaning "to jump." In cookery, sauté means to brown the food in a

little fat and turn it often to keep it from sticking. That's all there is to it, when a recipe tells you to saute onions, pineapple, potatoes, or meats.

"Frying" is still another cooking process. It means to cook in fat. Sometimes the fat is deep enough to entirely cover the food -- as in frying doughnuts or potato chips. But you can also fry with shallow fat in a skillet. Good examples of shallow-fat frying are fried okra, French toast, and fried apples. Some foods, such as sausages and bacon, fry in their own fat.

The word "braising" crops up again and again in both meat and vegetable cookery. To braise means to brown in a little hot fat, and then cook the food in steam -- with or without added liquid. Swiss steak is a good example of meat that is braised to make it tender enough to cut with a fork, although the steak comes from the chuck or rump of beef. Braising is also used for vegetables such as celery and carrots.

"Scalloping" is a word that is sometimes confusing because it is used for a variety of different dishes. Originally it meant to cook in a scallop shell or in a dish shaped like a shell. But today, scalloped foods come to the table in any shaped dish. The scalloped dish may be most any vegetable or seafood or a combination such as sweet potatoes and pineapple, cabbage with spaghetti and cheese, or eggplant and tomatoes. Usually the food is combined with a sauce -- tomato, cheese, or plain white sauce -- and baked in the oven until it is golden brown on top.

"Au gratin" and scalloped dishes are closely related, because au gratin means a dish with a browned covering of crumbs. However, the word "au gratin" is often mistaken to mean "with cheese," because cheese is so often added to bland au gratin vegetables.

"Batters" and "doughs" are alike, in that they are both mixtures of flour and liquid -- with other ingredients added for leavening and for flavor. But

batters are thinner than doughs. In fact, batters are thin enough to beat; and it is interesting to note that "batter" comes from an old English word that means "to strike." On the other hand, a dough is thick enough so you can knead it and roll it out.

Of course, batters are not all of the same consistency. There are very thin batters for pop-overs, and cover batters to coat egg-plant, onion rings, seafood, and chicken before frying. There are also medium batters for waffles and cakes, and stiff or drop batters for fritters and muffins. And under the heading of "doughs" come soft mixtures for biscuits and stiff mixtures for pastry.

In making batters and doughs it is important to know the exact meaning of words that describe how to mix the ingredients.

There's the word "creaming," for example. In a cake recipe, it means to blend the fat and sugar with a spoon until they are soft and creamy. However, when you "cream" vegetables you combine them with a sauce made of fat, flour, milk or cream, and seasonings.

"Cutting in" is the word used to describe the blending of fat and flour for biscuits or pie crust. You can use a knife, a fork, a biscuit cutter, or a pastry blender.

"Stirring" is an easy word to understand, but remember that it is not the same as beating or folding. To stir is to mix food with a circular motion -- as stirring a soft custard as it cooks.

"Beating" is the well known process used to incorporate air into eggs, to make fudge creamy, and to blend the ingredients of a cake. It is a regular rhythmic motion that lifts the mixture over and over -- accomplished with a spoon, wire whip, Dover beater, or mechanical beater.

"Folding" is the gentle process of combining beaten egg whites with the thicker part of the mixture for a souffle, a sponge cake, or a fluffy omelet. You actually fold the layers of the thicker mixture into the egg whites -- by putting the spoon or egg whip straight down to the bottom of the bowl, turning it under the mass, and bringing it straight up. Repeat the process until the mixing is complete.

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
OCTOBER 9, 1940 :

Washington, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

- - -

AMERICAN DIETS -- GOOD AND BAD

- - -

"An army marches on its stomach," is an ancient military proverb.

Modern nutritionists agree, but think of more than soldiers on the march. Food also is part of good strategy at home in peace times, they declare. The right food and enough of it, for every man, woman, and child builds strength for the present and the future.

To quote Dr. Hazel K. Stiebeling, food economist in the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture, "Every one of us in choosing our daily food, every homemaker planning meals for her family, can play a definite part in national defense.

"By eating the foods needed for good nutrition we can help to make America strong, ready for whatever lies ahead.

"A third of America's families are below the safety line in nutrition," Doctor Stiebeling states. "This is one of the hard facts that we must face and do something about. This comes not entirely from lack of money. It is true that millions of persons do not have enough money to buy a good diet. But millions more who spend enough, do not buy the right food values.

"Of course it takes careful planning to buy good nutrition cheaply," Doctor Stiebeling points out. "Make out your market lists for a week at a time to be sure that the meals fit together and make a balanced diet. Keep a record of how the food money is spent to make the most of every penny."

Even if you live in a city and buy all your food, as little as $2 to $3 a week can give each person a good diet, Bureau of Home Economics studies show. Watch for foods in season and notice price trends. Take advantage of weekend bargains. Study labels and compare quality as well as weights and prices.

If you live on a farm, you can probably have a cow and chickens to produce milk and eggs -- two important "protective" foods that take a good slice out of the food budget if you have to buy. Your garden is another step towards good nutrition. In warm climates a winter garden solves the problem of getting fresh vegetables throughout the year. And in other sections, the summer surplus can be stored or canned for winter use.

"A knowledge of nutrition helps you to get your money's worth when you buy food," Doctor Stiebeling continues. "The grocer cannot label all foods according to the vitamins and minerals they contain. But everybody who goes to market can carry a knowledge of food values that will help to make wise choices."

After you've shopped so carefully for food values, see that none of them are lost in the kitchen. Vegetables lose food values when stored too long. Dairy products and meat are in danger of spoilage if not kept cold.

To make the most of the food values, serve fresh fruit for breakfast, and also as a time-saving dessert. Serve raw vegetables in salads, or cut them in narrow strips to make a crunchy relish. When you cook vegetables, remember that short cooking in a small amount of water cuts down the loss of vitamins and minerals.

"Whether you eat at a table in the ~~kitchen~~ or in a modern restaurant, good nutrition and balanced diets are important to you as an American," Doctor Stiebeling says.

"America is seriously diet conscious, wants to abolish rickets, pellagra, and other diseases that come from faulty nutrition. But the American idea of diet is more than just to protect from disease. Americans want to be sure that the food they eat helps toward abounding good health."

To make it easy to plan balanced meals, the Bureau of Home Economics has worked out a set of diet plans in its bulletin, "Diets to Fit the Family Income." This bulletin is a dependable guide for the homemaker who wants to be sure her family is getting the right food. Some one of the diet plans will fit your family income -- whether it is large or small.

The diet plans cover important points such as these: How to spend your food money to best advantage. How foods differ in nutritive value. Which foods are most important? How much milk does the family need? How to make out a market list. How to plan meals. Do the children need as much food as their parents?

The bulletin, "Diets to Fit the Family Income" is available free through the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C.

- - - Y - - -

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
OCTOBER 16, 1940 :

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

- - - -

WHEN HOMEMAKERS ASK QUESTIONS

- - - -

Homemakers from Maine to California are asking many questions about food values, better nutrition, how to give their families well balanced meals.

When the questions are directed to the United States government, nutritionists in the Bureau of Home Economics supply the answers. Almost every letter in their mailbag is worth sharing with other homemakers. Here's a sample.

QUESTION: I have been told that oranges lose their vitamin C a few minutes after they are cut and squeezed for juice. Is this true?

ANSWER: Fortunately, orange juice does not lose its vitamin C for some time after it is squeezed. And oranges and orange juice rate as top notch sources of this important vitamin, especially during the winter when other fresh fruits and vegetables may be scarce. If you put orange juice in a covered container and keep it in the refrigerator, there is little loss of vitamin C until the second day.

QUESTION: Why are canned tomatoes always near the top of the list of foods rich in vitamin C, when other canned vegetables are not even mentioned?

ANSWER: To begin with, fresh tomatoes are richer in vitamin C than most other vegetables. And the acid of the tomatoes keeps the vitamin C from being destroyed in the canning process.

QUESTION: During the winter I buy canned vegetables rather than fresh ones because they are cheaper and it takes less fuel to cook them. Also I can't keep fresh vegetables on hand very long. Now I am wondering whether the canned vegetables are as good for us as the fresh ones. Do they furnish all the food values we need?

ANSWER: Canned vegetables have about the same food value that fresh vegetables have after they are cooked. But be sure to use the liquid from your canned vegetables. Serve it with the vegetables or use it in making soups, stews, and gravies. This liquid contains minerals and some vitamins, which you won't want to waste if you're trying to make your food money go as far as possible. If you don't use fresh vegetables your diet may be low in vitamin C, so be sure to use generous amounts of citrus fruits and fresh or canned tomatoes.

It's always a good plan also to have some raw fruits or vegetables in your meals each day. They furnish vitamins, and they give you variety in texture and flavor so your meals are more interesting.

QUESTION: I've been reading about the large surplus of prunes, and feel that I ought to be serving them often. What food values do they contain?

ANSWER: Prunes are a good source of iron and they also provide some calcium -- two minerals that you have to check carefully in planning your meals each day. Prunes also contribute some vitamin B_1 and some vitamin A to the diet. Aside from food values, you'll do well to make use of prunes because they are a low cost fruit -- full of flavor and easy to keep on hand.

QUESTION: I've been trying to plan our meals so they will have all the food values we need. But I can't get my husband to drink a pint of milk a day, as the diet plans recommend. I know he needs the milk for the calcium and other food values it contains. Can you give me any help?

ANSWER: The grown person who won't drink milk is a problem in many households. And, as you say, everybody needs the calcium of milk for the upkeep of the teeth and bony structure -- even after they are grown.

If you can't get your husband to drink milk, why not use it in cooking so he will eat the milk without realizing it. Cream soups, sauces, scalloped dishes, custards, and puddings offer good ways to include milk in the daily diet.

Of course American cheddar cheese, the yellow kind that you buy in slices, can also be a good source of calcium for adults. About 2½ ounces, or a little over one eighth pound, will give you about the same amount of calcium as a pint of fluid milk. You may not be able to use cheese as the source of calcium every day, but you can use it often in sandwiches, Welsh rabbit, cheese souffle, and with scalloped vegetables.

QUESTION: Is it necessary to supplement the diet with vitamins in concentrated form, such as pills and tablets?

ANSWER: For normal, healthy persons it's best to depend on a wise selection of foods for the necessary vitamins. For children, expectant mothers, and mothers who are nursing their babies, the nutritionists recommend fish-liver oil as a source of vitamins A and D. Otherwise, vitamin concentrates should be taken under the advice of a physician who has determined the reason the patient needs extra vitamins. He is the one to tell you what kind of concentrates to take and how much.

- - - Y - - -

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION :
OCTOBER 23, 1940 :

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture

- - - -

LET'S TALK TURKEY

- - - -

Turkeys are going to market earlier than usual this year, and in larger numbers than ever before.

Consumers have heard the same news about "more turkeys on the market" almost every fall for the last ten years. But the turkey crop for 1940 tops them all.

For a long time, most of the market turkeys were raised by farm women who wanted some extra pin money before Christmas. But it was a tricky business, often beset with losses instead of profits. Now scientists in the United States Department of Agriculture and the state experiment stations have added their research to the lore of the farm and trade, and turkey raising is less of a gamble.

There are still many farms that raise turkeys as a sideline. But there are thousands of other farms that have a single crop—turkeys and lots of them. So it is no wonder that these birds will be going to market over 30 million strong this year.

"Roast turkey" is becoming a common item on restaurant menus these days. Turkey appeals to the diner-out who wants something special. And turkey is quite economical to cook and serve. One large bird has more edible meat, less waste than several small ones that total up to the dressed weight of the large bird. It means less work for the cook, too. And the large supply of turkeys makes the price reasonable.

But restaurants are not the only ones making wider use of turkeys. Homemakers no longer reserve this royal bird for Thanksgiving and Christmas alone. They find that turkey is an ideal choice when there are guests, or just for the family dinner on Sunday. If the turkey is large, it serves as the main dish for other delicious meals to follow.

Cold slices of turkey are excellent "as is," or in sandwiches. You can also dice the cold turkey into a salad or make it into a jellied aspic. If you want a hot dish, it takes only a few minutes to turn the delicious tidbits of leftover turkey into a scalloped dish and brown it in the oven. Or you can make them into turkey croquettes with a crisp brown crust — or heat pieces of turkey and gravy in the oven, under a lid of biscuit rounds or mashed potato.

But all these good dishes start with a good bird, properly cooked. If you lack confidence in your ability to select a turkey, you can go to a market that handles government graded poultry. The best turkeys are graded U.S. Prime, and of course they are the highest in price. Next in line is the U. S. Choice, followed by the U. S. Commercial.

When buying a turkey, make a note of its dressed weight — that is, the weight of the bird before it is drawn, with the feathers removed but the head and feet still on. This dressed weight is your guide to the time and temperature for roasting.

When it comes to roasting the bird the Bureau of Home Economics of the United States Department of Agriculture has some helpful suggestions. This is how Lucy Alexander, the poultry cooking specialist, explains them. "Always roast a young turkey in an uncovered pan at moderate heat. The exact temperature of the oven depends on the size of the turkey. Remember that you want a lower temperature for a large bird, because it takes longer to get the meat done and you don't want to burn the skin.

"Your roasting pan can be any shallow pan that's large enough to hold the turkey. You don't need a cover, but be sure to have a rack in the bottom of the pan. The rack keeps the bird from sticking, and allows the hot air of the oven to circulate under the bird. The rack you use for cooling cakes will work very well, if it is of sturdy construction.

"Stuff your turkey and sew up the openings," Miss Alexander continues. "Then put the turkey on the rack, with the breast down and the back up. If you roast the turkey with the back up most of the time, the thighs will get done without cooking the meat off the end of the breastbone.

"Now pop the bird into the oven, and don't pu any water in the roasting pan. Water will only steam the meat instead of roasting it.

"Turning the turkey and basting it with pan drippings or melted fat is an important part of roasting the bird. Every half to three-quarters of an hour, turn the turkey over or move it from one side to the other so all the thick, meaty portions will get done evenly. Clean folded cloths will protect your hands, and they are better than a fork that may break the skin."

Miss Alexander's method for roasting turkey is given in detail in the Bureau of Home Economics leaflet -- "Poultry Cooking." You can get your free copy by sending a post card to the U. S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D. C.

- - - Y - - -

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS

United States Department of Agriculture

RELEASE FOR PUBLICATION
OCTOBER 30, 1940

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE MARKET BASKET

by

Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture

- - - -

FILLING THE FLOUR BIN

- - - -

Every home once had its own flour mill. But that was back when civilization was young, and a flour mill was simply two flat stones that a woman could rub together to crack the grain. Milling by such crude methods would be an endless job today, for each American uses about 200 pounds of flour and other cereal products in the course of a year.

Today, wheat and rye and other grains are ground in large mills by huge motor-driven rollers. And you can buy flour in convenient sacks -- the 5-pound size to fill a neat cannister in the apartment kitchen, 24½ or 49 pound bags for the flour bin if you do a great deal of baking.

Homemakers today take this staple grocery pretty much for granted. But they do know that modern milling gives them a variety of different flour products, and they must decide which flour is best for yeast breads, for quick breads, for cake, and for pastry.

Through a series of hearings the Food and Drug Administration of the Federal Security Agency is now working out exact definitions for different types of flour. These standards are yet to be established. But the homemaker can find out something about the different kinds of flour on the market--why she needs a different kind for bread than for cake, how to judge quality, the special way to handle different kinds of flour.

Wheat flour is used most widely because it makes large, light loaves of bread. The wheat contains two special proteins and when mixed with liquid they form a sticky, elastic mass known as gluten.

Any child who has made paste from flour and water is familiar with this gluten. It is sticky enough to hold pictures down in a scrap book; and it will stretch out in long, rubbery strings. If it were possible to pump gas into every cell of the flour paste, the gluten would stretch and hold the gas just as it does when yeast forms carbon dioxide in making bread.

In fact, good quality gluten is very elastic; it can easily "double in bulk" without breaking. Flour that contains this high quality gluten is called "strong" flour. It is made from the hard wheat types and is the baker's first choice for making yeast bread.

In the modern milling process, the flour is separated into several streams, each slightly different. The grade of the flour depends on the way these streams are mixed. Patent flour is the usual grade sold in retail grocery stores.

When you make fine cakes and pastry, you're interested in a tender texture -- not in strong gluten. In fact, too much gluten makes the cake tough and rubbery. So, for cakes and pastry, the home baker uses a "weak" flour that comes from soft wheat.

Many homemakers prefer to buy just one kind of flour that will be suitable for anything they bake -- bread, muffins, biscuits, or cake. For them there is an "all purpose" or "family" flour, a blend of hard and soft wheat, that has enough gluten to make good yeast bread and will also produce fairly tender cakes and quick breads.

Most of the flour on the market is the plain white kind -- made from the inner part of the wheat grain, with the germ and most of the bran removed. But some flour is also made from the entire grain, and sold as whole-wheat flour,

graham flour, or entire wheat flour. The crumb of bread made from this flour is brown in color, and the loaf is not quite so light as that made from the more common white flour.

Rye flour is also used for bread but it is usually combined with wheat flour, because the gluten formed is not very elastic. Rye flour alone is used in making some specialty breads such as pumpernickel.

Flour can also be made from corn, oats, rice, potatoes, soybeans, lima beans, and buckwheat. But none of these flours contain gluten. So you must mix them with wheat flour to make a light loaf of bread.

In following a recipe, exact measurements are important, and flour is probably the trickiest of the ingredients to measure. If the flour is packed down, you may be able to get as much as $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups into a one-cup measure. That's why recipes tell you to sift the flour before you measure it -- except coarse whole-wheat flour, which will not go through an ordinary sifter. After the flour is sifted, dip it gently into a measuring cup. A cup that is level on top is ideal because you can run a knife over the top and get an exact measure.

Always use the kind of flour suggested in a recipe--hard wheat, soft wheat, or all purpose. Then there is less chance that you will have cakes that are tough, or bread that is heavy and poor in shape.

In making doughs, the cook may be puzzled to find that the recipe suggests only an approximate amount of flour; for example, the directions for making biscuits, say "enough milk to make a soft dough." Recipes can not be specific on these points when different types of flour vary so much. Strong flours absorb more liquid than weak flours, so it takes more water or milk to make them into a soft dough. When you make bread from a new lot of flour, it's best to measure the amount of flour you use and note how it acts. If you get good results, use the same measurements and methods as long as that lot of flour lasts. If the flour has dried out in the meantime, it will require somewhat more liquid to make a soft dough.